

Deuteronomy 20:1-9 - Thursday, October 13th, 2011

(1) "When you go out to battle against your enemies, and see horses and chariots *and* people more numerous than you, do not be afraid of them; for the LORD your God *is* with you, who brought you up from the land of Egypt.

- Right out of the shoot here in verse one, we already have an invaluable life lesson as it relates to the battles that we face in our Christian lives.
- Notice it says; "when' you go out to battle, not 'if' you go out to battle." In other words, spiritual battles in our lives, are the reality of our lives.
- It's important to note that in light of these battles that the Israelites would enter into, the Lord was assuring them that He would be with them.

- It was for this reason that they were not to be afraid of their enemies when they saw that they were outnumbered in chariots, horses and men.
- Moses is telling them both when, and how the Lord is going to grant them the grace of going before them, and in addition to that, being for them.
- In other words, the only way to know; "no fear," as it were, is to "know Him," and that if He is for us, so there is no one who can be against us.

Romans 8:31 NIV What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us?

- There's something else here that I want to draw your attention to before we move on to verse two and it sort of ties into our teaching in Romans.
- After the Lord tells them to not be afraid of their enemies who outnumber them, He tells them He's with them and for them, then He says why.
- It's because He brought them up from the land of Egypt and in so doing, has too much invested in them, namely His reputation, to forsake them.

- For the benefit of those who were not with us this past Sunday in our Grace Works study out of Romans four, this is grace first, then faith next.
- Often times God will allow us to be the recipients of His life changing grace in order to fill the tank of our unwavering faith in His promises to us.
- We saw this with Abraham as well as David, and it's ever so powerfully pictured here with the Israelites. First it's by grace, then it's through faith.

(2) So it shall be, when you are on the verge of battle, that the priest shall approach and speak to the people. (3) And he shall say to them, 'Hear, O Israel: Today you are on the verge of battle with your enemies. Do not let your heart faint, do not be afraid, and do not tremble or be terrified because of them; (4) for the LORD your God *is* He who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.'

- Moses is now taking it a step further and tells the Israelites what to do when, again, not if, they are on the verge of entering into the battle field.
- He says that they are to have the priest approach and speak to the people, saying to them; 'Hear, O Israel,' don't faint, tremble or be terrified.
- He tells them, not only does the Lord your God go with you, He will also fight these battles for you, against your enemies in order to save you.

- Question; "how many times have you heard, and or said; "the battle belongs to the Lord?" Or, how about being asked; "how goes the battle?"
- I would suggest to you that both the question, and the answer to the question, is ever so beautifully woven into the fabric of these three verses.
- When asked; "how goes the battle," the answer becomes; "the battle is going smashingly well, because the battle belongs to the Lord my God!"

- One of the best examples of the battle belonging to the Lord is found in 1 Samuel 17-18, with David, who pictures the person of Jesus Christ.

Goliath roamed the land for 40 (judgment) days.	Goliath a type of Satan roams the earth until he is judged.
David was the "8 th " (new beginning) son of Jesse.	Jesus gives all a "new beginning" as the Son of God.
David was a shepherd, tending his father's sheep.	Jesus is the good shepherd and we are His sheep.
David was sent into the battleground by his father.	Jesus was sent into the world by the Father.
David came with bread for the Israelite soldiers.	Jesus is the bread of life for us as Christian soldiers.
David was scorned by his brothers.	Jesus was scorned by His Jewish brothers.
David was asked, "why did you come down here".	Jesus told us, "why He did come down to earth".
David had on then took off King Saul's armor.	Jesus had on then took off His Kingly garments.
David had "5" (grace) stones in his sling to save Israel.	Jesus has by grace saved us as He will also save Israel.
David fought the battle on behalf of the Israelites.	Jesus fights the battle on our behalf.
David won an inheritance, a bride, and freedom for them.	Jesus wins us as His inheritance, His bride, and sets us free.
David and Jonathan's soul were then knit together.	Jesus saves then knits our soul for all eternity together.

- There's one more thing that we need to see here, and it has to do with Moses telling them that it was to be the priest who would speak to them.
- I believe that this reinforces the importance of a pastor's role in the life of a believer, and it serves as a sobering reminder to me as a pastor.
- As I was thinking about this, and meditating on this, the Lord showed me how it is, and why it is, that pastors are judged by a stricter standard.

James 3:1-12 NIV (1) Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. (2) We all stumble in many ways. If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check. (3) When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. (4) Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. (5) Likewise the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. (6) The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell. (7) All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and creatures of the sea are being tamed and have been tamed by man, (8) but no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. (9) With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. (10) Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be. (11) Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? (12) My brothers, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

Proverbs 18:21 NIV The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.

- Here's the bottom line; both Proverbs, and James, the New Testament Proverbs, declare that our tongue has the power to either curse or bless.
- This brings to mind one of the biggest lies ever put to rhyme; "sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me." Right!!!
- The reason that pastor's are judged more strictly, is that we have more of a propensity to use our tongue to speak more words, more recklessly.

Proverbs 12:18 NIV Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

Ecclesiastes 10:12 NIV Words from a wise man's mouth are gracious, but a fool is consumed by his own lips.

(5) "Then the officers shall speak to the people, saying: 'What man *is there* who has built a new house and has not dedicated it? Let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man dedicate it. (6) Also what man *is there* who has planted a vineyard and has not eaten of it? Let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man eat of it. (7) And what man *is there* who is betrothed to a woman and has not married her? Let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man marry her.'

- Here, Moses is listing three groups of men who were basically given an exemption from going into the battle, lest they were to die in that war.
- It's the man who's building a house, and it's the man who's planting a vineyard, and then it's a man who's engaged and planning to get married.
- The common denominator with all three, is that they are likely still very young, and just starting out in life, with their whole lives in front of them.

- This is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is that it shows the goodness of God in wanting His people to experience joy.
- I find this to be most encouraging by virtue of how it would seemingly indicate that the Christian life is not always full of battles, it's full of joy too.
- I like how one commentator said it; "In this, we see God's desire that people delight in His blessings, before they devote themselves to battle."

- If you were to ask the average person who wasn't a Christian what they thought about a Christian they would probably say; they don't have fun.
- Sadly, in most cases, they are absolutely right. Perhaps it's because Satan is a liar and a thief and he has succeeded in stealing our joy from us.
- If we do have joy, we apologize when God prospers us with the building of a house, or starting of a business, or even having a blessed marriage

Ecclesiastes 7:14 NKJV In the day of prosperity be joyful, But in the day of adversity consider: Surely God has appointed the one as well as the other, So that man can find out nothing *that will come* after him.

- When God has prospered and blessed you, not only should you not have to apologize for it, you should really be thank and joyful because of it.
- I'm of the belief that our joylessness is both the source of and the reason for our powerlessness, and the Devil knows that's how he can get us.
- The fact of the matter is, it's actually from that joy in the Lord, that the strength from the Lord comes, when, not if, that day of adversity comes.

Nehemiah 8:9-10 NIV Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who were instructing the people said to them all, "This day is sacred to the LORD your God. Do not mourn or weep." For all the people had been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law. (10) Nehemiah said, "Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is sacred to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

(8) "The officers shall speak further to the people, and say, 'What man *is there who is* fearful and fainthearted? Let him go and return to his house, lest the heart of his brethren faint like his heart.'

- This could almost be categorized as a fourth group to be exempt from going to war, however, it's for different reasons than the other three were.
- We're told that the reason why they were to return home was because their fearfulness and faintheartedness would be contagious with others.
- This is certainly true for us. We all have the propensity to bring others down with our stinking thinking, needing a check up from the neck up.

(9) And so it shall be, when the officers have finished speaking to the people, that they shall make captains of the armies to lead the people.

- I find it interesting that the Lord has the military officers, and not the priests, not only speak to the people, but deputize and authorize captains.
- Perhaps this was because the officers were the ones in authority over the military, and would need to be the vessels that spoke into their lives.
- Sometimes, God will use certain people in our lives, and give them a God given authority to speak into our lives, as opposed to someone else.

- I'll take it a step further and point out that there's a lesson to be learned with respect to serving the Lord in ministry, enlisting in the Lord's army.
- If I'm not a leader in my home, if I'm lazy at my work, if I'm not loving my wife, and if I'm not trusting my God, then I'm not fit for the ministry.
- These are the four legs on the table of ministry that need to be strong, for my service for the Lord to succeed, under the authority of any office.